

POLITICS, PROPAGANDA, & CINEMA

POLS 3426-001

Thursdays 6:30 – 9:00pm

Oak Hall 112



"We are convinced that films constitute one of the most modern and scientific means of influencing the masses. Therefore the government must not neglect them."

-Joseph Goebbels, Nazi Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment

Professor: Dr. David L. Richards
Office: Oak Hall 448
Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays: 2pm – 3:30pm. Appointments are available in 15-minute increments and are to be made in advance via Nexus (nexus.uconn.edu).
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Welcome! Using a WWII-era lens, this course explores propaganda films of many types: dramatic narratives, animated cartoons, documentaries, instructional films, and others. We will analyze how sight and sound can be consciously manipulated by filmmakers and governments in order to convey specific messages to viewers. You will find the principles and lessons from this era to be timeless in attempting to analyze a great deal of current and future domestic and international politics.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Celluloid Soldiers by Michael Birdwell
Ingram: 978-0814798713

Propaganda by Edward Bernays
Ig Publishing: 978-0970312594

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

Exams (2 @ 35% each):

You will be given two exams. These exams will require you to compare the films we have viewed, as well as discuss them with regards to the assigned readings and our in-class discussions. **Please note that things such as vacations, previously purchased tickets or reservations, social events, misreading the exam schedule and over-sleeping are not viable excuses for missing an exam.**

Propaganda Group Project (30%)

In groups, you will create your own propaganda about an issue of today's world. This can be related to foreign policy, like much of that during World War II, or it can be related to other areas such the environment, the economy, community concerns or other areas of interest. In planning your propaganda, think about your intended audience, the overall message you want to communicate, what symbols and statements you will use to convey this message, and how you will emotionally draw the viewer to take some sort of action.¹

The style and submission guidelines are at the end of this syllabus.

Directions:

- You will create a five-minute propaganda video for a propaganda issue and objective of your choosing.²
- You will also submit a 7-page paper that explains in detail:
 - (i) Your issue, (ii) what exactly it is you wish to propagandize about this issue, and (iii) who is the target audience.
 - How it is this video will achieve your propaganda objective(s). You will explain your use of symbols, language, pictures/photos, light, etc. as devices to achieve your directive. You will explain how your propaganda fits with the principles laid out in Bernays and discussed in lecture and how any lessons from our films helped you create your piece of propaganda.
- The project is due by the start of class on Thursday, December 5th, when your group will screen your video for the class and take questions from the instructor and your peers.

A Word to Those Already Freaking Out About This Assignment

This is not a digital media or film course, so you are not getting graded on your technical abilities as a videographer/filmmaker. You'll be graded on your use of propaganda devices —e.g. symbols, language, pictures/photos, light, etc.—discussed in class and readings to achieve your propaganda goal(s). For those who simply cannot bear to be associated with making a video, each group must submit a short paper along with the video, so there is that.

¹ This language borrows liberally from <https://www-tc.pbs.org/thewar/downloads/propaganda.pdf>

² UConn provides to students free and easy-to-use (even I can use it!) editing software such as [Open Shot](#).

ABOUT READING FILMS

Taking high-quality notes on the films we watch is *crucial* for several reasons: (1) Several of the films are rare and thus not-widely available to watch outside class, (2) You need to compare these films in detail on your exams, and (3) You need to have information about the films to discuss them in class and these discussions are important for developing insights about the films.

A productive discussion will absolutely require (a) having done the readings for that week, and (b) having watched the film closely for particular things.

The list of questions below is designed to help you know what types of information to keep track of while watching these films, as well as the central framework for our discussions.

- A. What is the main message or point of view of the filmmaker(s)? What is the message that the filmmakers wanted viewers to take away?
- B. Who were the major characters (*make sure you have their names correct!*)? How did their traits, acts, and relationship to one another affect the film's message?
- C. What symbols/stereotypes/archetypes, if any, were used to help convey the main message?
- D. Which scene(s) was/were most important to conveying the message(s)? In detail, why?
- E. How did the *acting / directing / scenery / camerawork / editing / soundtrack / score* affect delivery of the message?

CLASS SCHEDULE

Readings marked [HCT] can be found on the class Husky CT site.

8/29 WELCOME

- Bernays: Introduction – Chpt 3
- Institute for Propaganda Analysis. 1937. “How to Detect Propaganda” *Propaganda Analysis* 1.2 [Reprinted in *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (1915-1955)* 24.1 (Jan. 1938) pp. 49-55.] [HCT]
- Hubley, John and Zachary Schwartz. 1946. “Animation Learns A New Language.” *Hollywood Quarterly* 1.4: 360-363. [HCT]
- Lee, Sander H. 2009. “Herr Meets Hare: Donald and Bugs Fight Hitler.” *artUS* 26.1: 70-75. [HCT]

9/5 Fascist Propaganda or Empty Calories for the Eyes?

Triumph des Willens (1935): Leni Riefenstahl, 114 min.

- Sinclair, Thornton. 1938. “The Nazi Party Rally at Nuremberg.” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2.4: 570-583. [HCT]
- Sontag, Susan. 1975. “Fascinating Fascism.” *The New York Review of Books* February 6 [HCT]
- Hinton, David B., reply by Susan Sontag. 1975. “An Exchange on Leni Riefenstahl.” *The New York Review of Books* September 18 [HCT]
- Hinton, David B. 1975. “‘Triumph of the Will’: Document or Artifice?” *Cinema Journal* 15.1: 48-57. [HCT]

9/12 Celluloid Soldiers I

Confessions of a Nazi Spy (1939): Anatole Litvak, 104 min.

- Birdwell: Introduction – Chpt 3

9/19 Nazi Martyrs

Hitler Youth Quex (1933): Hans Steinhof, 95 min.

- Bernays: Chpts 4, 6
- Baird, Jay W. 1983. “From Berlin to Neubabelsberg: Nazi Film Propaganda and Hitler Youth Quex” *Journal of Contemporary History*: 18.3: 495-515. [HCT]

9/26 The “Artsy” Side of Nazi Anti-Semitic Propaganda

Jud Süß (1940): Veit Harlan, 98 min.

- Bernays: Chpt 10
- Sheffi, Na'ama. 2003. “Jews, Germans and the Representation of Jud Süß in Literature and Film.” *Jewish Culture and History* 6.2: 25-42. [HCT]

10/3 Celluloid Soldiers II

Sergeant York (1941): Howard Hawks, 134min.

- Birdwell: Chpts 4, 5
- Herz, Martin F. 1949. “Some Psychological Lessons from Leaflet Propaganda in World War II.” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 13.3: 471-486. [HCT]

10/10 Celluloid Soldiers III

Sergeant York (1941): Howard Hawks, 134min.

- Birdwell: Chpts 6, 7

10/17 MIDTERM EXAM**10/24 It's a Propagandaful Life**

Why We Fight (1942-1945): Frank Capra

- Bernays: Chpt 9
- Garrett, Greg. 1994. "It's Everybody's War." *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 22.2: 70-78. [HCT]
- United States Office of War Information, Bureau of Motion Pictures. 1942. *Government Information Manual for the Motion Picture Industry*
<https://libraries.indiana.edu/collection-digital-archive-gimmpi> [Read: Introduction & Sections I – VI]

10/31 Forget everything you've been told ... the USSR is our friend! I

Mission to Moscow (1943): Michael Curtiz, 124 min.

- Bennett, Todd. 2001. "Culture, Power, and Mission to Moscow: Film and Soviet-American Relations during World War II." *The Journal of American History* 88.2: 489-518. [HCT]

11/7 Forget everything you've been told ... the USSR is our friend! II

Mission to Moscow (1943): Michael Curtiz, 124 min.

- Glantz, David M. 1991. "Observing the Soviets: U.S. Army Attaches in Eastern Europe During the 1930s." *The Journal of Military History* 55.2: 153-184. [HCT]
- Wallace, Henry A. 1942. "Tribute to Russia" Address made at the *Salute to our Russian Ally* meeting at Madison Square Garden, November 8, 1942, held by the Congress of American-Soviet Friendship [HCT]

11/14 Hollywood Strikes Back

The Purple Heart (1944): Lewis Milestone, 99min.

- Scott, James M. 2015. "The Untold Story of the Vengeful Japanese Attack After the Doolittle Raid." *Smithsonian.com* [HCT]
- United Nations War Crimes Commission. 1948. "Case No. 25. Trial Of Lieutenant-General Shigeru Sawada And Three Others . United States Military Commission, Shanghai, 27th February, 1946-15th April, 1946" (Pages viii – 24) In *Law Reports of Trials of War Criminals Volume V*. London: The United Nations War Crimes Commission. [HCT]

11/21 Japanese Anti-American Propaganda

Hawai Mare oki kaizen (1942): Kajiro Yamamoto, Motoyoshi Oda, 117 min.

- Berreman, Joel V. 1948. "Assumptions About America in Japanese War Propaganda to the United States." *American Journal of Sociology* 54.2: 108-117. [HCT]

11/28 THANKSGIVING BREAK**12/5 Propaganda Project Presentations
Distribution of Take-Home Exam #2****12/xx Take-Home Exam #2 Due by xxpm**

The exam due date will be announced as soon as the registrar's office announces the schedule. Final exam week for Fall 2019 takes place from Monday, December 9th through Sunday, December 15, 2019.

CLASS RULES:**Notes/Photos/Videos/Sound Recording, Etc.**

You do not have permission to record any sounds or images from or during class. You do not have permission to make publicly available any class notes or materials – complete, partial, or summarized -- for paid or unpaid access by any other persons via any forum and/or via any medium. Any violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

Lateness

Habitual lateness to class is unprofessional and disrespectful to other students and to the professor. Habitual lateness to class is disruptive and will be handled as such.

Phones / Other Electronic Devices:

- Turn off the ringer of your phone/electronic devices BEFORE class begins. You will not be in trouble for a single accident of forgetting to turn off your phone and having it ring in class -- once in a while, everyone (*including the professor*) forgets to turn off his/her phone. So, if your phone rings in class, *please have the decency to turn it off and not let it ring* and ring until the caller hangs up or voicemail kicks in.
- Chronic cases of disruption via electronic devices will be referred to the Office of Student Services & Advocacy.
- You MAY use a laptop/tablet, etc during lectures.
 - If the professor sees that too much laptop activity is being devoted to non-course activities (e.g., social media, etc), permission to use laptops/tablets/etc. will be revoked.
- Use of earbuds/earphones is strictly prohibited.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be powered up or on during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be visible during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- If you are caught using *any* kind of electronic device during an exam, you will automatically receive a zero on the exam.

E-Mail:

You are responsible for checking your UCONN-registered e-mail every day, especially before classes and exams. Notices, important dates, reading changes, and the like will be announced via e-mail.

Communicating & Making Appointments With Me

E-mail is the single-best way to reach me. *Be sure to use ADVAPP to make appointments.*

Makeup Exams:

Makeup exams present severe equity problems for everyone involved in the course. Makeup exams will ONLY be scheduled for those with DOCUMENTED medical, University-sanctioned activity, or direct family member's death- associated excuses. ***There are NO exceptions to the makeup exam rule.*** For example, exams missed because of vacation, weddings, oversleeping, sickness not bad enough to get a doctor's excuse, etc., cannot be made up.

Excused Absences:

Excused absences are limited to absences where there is a documented medical excuse for that/those date(s) missed, a University-sanctioned event directly affecting the student, or the documented death of an immediate family member. Examples of things that do not count as excused are job interviews, weddings, work-related conflicts, and vacations.

Late Penalty

Late penalties begin accruing immediately after I have collected work from all those in attendance at the beginning of class, rounded up to the hour, at a penalty of 2 points per hour.

Academic Integrity

In this course we aim to conduct ourselves as a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. You are encouraged to study together, discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, and go to the Writing Center with your drafts. In this course, those activities are well within the bounds of academic honesty. However, when you use another's ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation. Even one occasion of academic dishonesty, large or small, on *any* assignment, large or small, will result in failure for the entire course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs. For University policies on academic honesty, please see UConn's *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* and the Office of Community Standards: <http://www.community.uconn.edu>

Students With Disabilities

Please contact me during office hours to discuss academic accommodations that may be needed during the semester due to a documented disability. The Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature and functional limitations of a student's documented disability, he/she may be eligible for academic accommodations. CSD collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the CSD website at www.csd.uconn.edu.

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate Romantic relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate Romantic relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University.

More information is available at <http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=2884> .

Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

To protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report assaults they witness or are told about to the Office of Diversity & Equity under the Sexual Assault Response Policy. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at <http://sexualviolence.uconn.edu/> .

GRADE CALCULATION:

Your final grade will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{FINAL GRADE} = [.35 (\text{Exam 1}) + .35 (\text{Exam 2}) + .30 (\text{Propaganda Project})]$$

Final class grades will be assigned as such:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	59 or below

STYLE & SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PROJECT

Propaganda Issue Approval

Your propaganda issue will be of your own choosing, but it must be pre-approved by the instructor in order to earn credit for the assignment. This is for two reasons. First, to make sure you don't choose something that will be too difficult with which to succeed, grade-wise. Second, your propaganda issue must conform with standards set by UConn Community Standards (<https://community.uconn.edu/>), in particular *The Student Code*.

Groups will be announced by the instructor the second week of class and, by the start of class on week three (9/12), each group will submit to the instructor (via email) its best propaganda idea, along with two alternatives. Once the instructor approves an idea for your group, you may move ahead with the project.

Materials Submission

Finished project materials will be submitted by the group to the instructor electronically (via email) by the start of class on Thursday, December 5th, as such:

- 7-pg report: PDF file
 - The report is to be 7 full pages of body-text (not including title page, bib, etc.), typed, 11 or 12-pt font and double spaced, 1" margins maximum
 - Make sure to list all group members' names on the title page
 - You may use any standardized parenthetical citation & bibliography system (APA, MLA, etc.)
- Video: Any common Windows-compatible video file type

Class Presentation

At the final class meeting (December 5th), each group will have 15 minutes (minimum) to present its work to the class and take questions from the instructor and from class members. You may use any available classroom technology for your presentation. This presentation forms some part of your overall project grade, as the goal of propaganda is to influence people. This is your chance to use your propaganda and see how it goes over.